

REMARKS

Prior to this Reply, Claims 1-23 and 51-62 were pending. Through this Reply, Claims 1, 7, 13, 51, 54 and 59 have been cancelled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter claimed therein. Furthermore, Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-23, 52, 53, 55-58 and 60-62 have been amended. No claims have been added. Accordingly, Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-23, 52, 53, 55-58 and 60-62 are now at issue in the present case.

I. Objected-To Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-23, 52, 53, 55-58 and 60-62

The Examiner objected to Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-23, 52, 53, 55-58 and 60-62 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner indicated that such claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicants have amended Claims 2-6, 8, 10-12, 14-19, 21-23, 52, 53, 55-58, 60 and 61, so that they are independent form and so that they include substantially all of the limitations of their corresponding base claims and any intervening claims. The remaining claims depend from one of the aforementioned independent claims and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend.

II. Rejection of Claims 1, 7, 13, 51, 54, and 59 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 7, 13, 51, 54 and 59 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,115,200 to Allen et al. (hereinafter “Allen”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,815 to Kasiraj et al. (hereinafter “Kasiraj”).

In response, in order to expedite allowance of the present application, Applicants have cancelled Claims 1, 7, 13, 51, 54 and 59 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

III. Objection to Claim 11

The Examiner objected to Claim 11 because of an informality. Specifically, the Examiner indicated that there should be a space between “Claim” and “1” in line 1 of Claim 11. Applicants submit that the Examiner’s objection has been overcome in view of the amendment made to Claim 11.

IV. Certain Other Amendments to the Claims

Claim 9 has been amended to depend from independent Claim 8. Accordingly, certain duplicative claim language was stricken therefrom. Claim 20, which depends from Claim 19, was amended to strike certain duplicative claim language. Claim 21 was amended to correct an obvious typographical error by changing the word “refined” to “required.” Claim 62 was amended to change its dependency from Claim 56 to Claim 55.

Applicants also note that the limitations of Claim 7 were incorporated into Claim 8 to provide proper antecedent basis. Furthermore, the limitations of Claim 59 were incorporated into Claims 60 and 61 to provide proper antecedent basis.

V. Amendments to Specification

Applicants have amended the specification to correct obvious errors. No new matter has been added.

VI. Additional Claim Fees

In determining whether additional claim fees are due, reference is made to the Fee Calculation Table (below).

Fee Calculation Table						
	Claims Remaining After Amendment		Highest Number Previously Paid For	Present Extra	Rate	Additional Fee
Total (37 CFR 1.16(c))	29	Minus	62	= 0	x \$18 =	\$ 0.00
Independent (37 CFR 1.16(b))	26	Minus	7	= 19	x \$86 =	\$ 1634.00

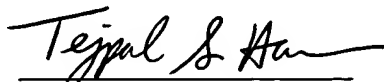
As set forth in the Fee Calculation Table (above), Applicants previously paid claim fees for sixty-two (62) total claims and for seven (7) independent claims. Therefore, Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2198 in the amount of \$1634.00 for the presentation of nineteen (19) independent claims over seven (7). Although Applicants believe that no other fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2198 for any fee deficiencies associated with filing this paper.

VII. Conclusion

Applicants believe that the application appears to be in form for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number regarding any matters relating to the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



Tejpal S. Hansra
Registration No. 38,172
Hansra Patent Services
4525 Glen Meadows Place
Bellingham, WA 98226
(360) 527-1400

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